

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicants thank the Examiner for the careful examination given to the present application. The application has been reviewed in light of the Office action, and it is respectfully submitted that the application as amended is patentable over the art of record. Reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Claim 1 has been canceled. Claims 2 and 4-6 have been amended.

Claims 2 and 5-7 are objected to. Claims 2 and 5 have been amended to correct the informalities as suggested by the Examiner.

Claims 1, 4-7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tomomatsu (U.S. Patent No. 5,623,872) in view of Taniguchi et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,735,203). Claim 1 has been canceled. Claim 5 has been amended to include the subject matter of claim 2. Claim 6 has been amended and rewritten in independent form. For the following reasons, the Examiner's rejection is respectfully traversed.

None of the reference disclose or suggest "wherein in start of said plate separating operation, a plurality of acceleration and deceleration patterns are set so that acceleration and deceleration is repeated at nearly equal the upper limit speed, and wherein thereafter deceleration is performed continuously until said plate separating operation is completed" as recited in amended claim 5. Tomomatsu discloses a first speed pattern P4 that accelerates to an upper limit speed and then decelerates to a zero value. Tomomatsu does not disclose or suggest that in the start of the plate separating operation, a plurality of acceleration and deceleration patterns are set so that acceleration and deceleration is repeated at nearly equal the upper limit speed. Tomomatsu also does not disclose or suggest that deceleration is then performed continuously until said plate separating operation is completed. Therefore, even if combined, the references do not disclose or suggest all the elements of the claimed invention.

None of the reference disclose or suggest "acceleration and deceleration are not repeated, but deceleration is performed continuously until said plate separating operation is completed" as recited in amended claim 6. Tomomatsu discloses a first speed pattern P4 that accelerates to a upper limit speed

and then decelerates to a zero value. Tomomatsu does not disclose or suggest that acceleration and deceleration are not repeated, but that deceleration is performed continuously until said plate separating operation is completed. Therefore, even if combined, the references do not disclose or suggest all the elements of the claimed invention.

Claim 2 is objected to, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 2 has been amended to overcome the objection, and claim 4 has been amended to depend from claim 2. Therefore, claims 2 and 4 are in allowable condition.

In light of the foregoing, it is submitted that the application as amended is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the application.

If there are any additional fees resulting from this communication, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. 36069.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: 11-10-04